



**Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona**

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FEDERAL INMATES FOUND GUILTY OF FIRST DEGREE MURDER OF FELLOW INMATE

PHOENIX - The U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona announced that on January 26, 2005, Jesse Rothchild Moore, age 23, and Joseph Nicholas Fuentes, age 29, both of Phoenix, were found guilty of First Degree Murder and Conspiracy to Commit Murder. Nicholas Pablo, age 26, also of Phoenix, was found guilty of Conspiracy to Commit Murder. All three were found guilty by a federal jury in Phoenix; a fourth defendant was found not guilty. All four are currently serving other sentences within the Bureau of Prisons.

The evidence at trial showed that the defendants and other co-conspirators developed a plan, while inmates at FCI Phoenix, to kill Jesus Lopez-Rocha because he was believed to have cooperated with federal authorities in the prosecution of the Fuentes family drug distribution ring. Lopez-Rocha arrived at FCI Phoenix to serve his sentence in connection with a drug conviction and shortly thereafter was stabbed to death with a prison "shank" while near the exercise track on the FCI Phoenix prison yard by Jesse Moore, the prisoner finally chosen by the conspirators to actually commit the murder. The plan to kill the victim was allegedly finalized and perfected over approximately one year of planning.

All four defendants had been charged with violating Title 18, U.S. Code, Section 1111, Murder in the First Degree and Section 1117, Conspiracy to commit Murder in the First Degree. The case was tried before U.S. District Court Judge James A. Teilborg commencing on November 30, 2004, with the jury returning the verdict on January 26, 2005.

A conviction for Murder in the First Degree carries a mandatory penalty of life in prison, a \$250,000 fine or both. A conviction for Conspiracy to commit Murder in the First Degree carries a maximum penalty of life in prison, a \$250,000 fine or both. Sentencing is set before Judge Teilborg for Joseph Fuentes and Nicholas Pablo on April 18, 2005, and for Jesse Moore on April 25, 2005.

The investigation leading to the guilty verdict was conducted by the FBI with assistance from the Federal Bureau of Prisons Special Investigations. The prosecution was handled by Kurt M. Altman and Kimberly M. Hare, Assistant U.S. Attorneys, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR-03-764-PHX-JAT
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